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STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Design Public Meeting
Proposed Improvements of (SR) 66, Hawkins County
Project No. STP-66(38), 37005-1237-14
November 17, 2016

Bulls Gap School
315 Allen Drive
Bulls Gap, TN 37711

1 MR. NAGI: Well, good evening, Everyone,
2 and thank you very much for coming out tonight. We
3 know everybody's got a lot of things that they're
4 doing in their lives and making a few minutes -- or
5 taking a few minutes to join us. We really do
6 appreciate that.

7 My name is Mark Nagi. I'm the Community
8 Relations Officer for Tennessee's Department of
9 Transportation in Knoxville. We're here tonight to
10 discuss the proposed improvements of State Route 66
11 in Hawkins County. The meeting is being held to
12 provide the public an opportunity to provide comments
13 regarding this proposed project and for TDOT
14 representatives to provide information about the
15 various aspects of the project.

16 Joining us tonight from the Tennessee
17 Department of Transportation are: From TDOT
18 headquarters in Nashville, Freddy Miller, Pete
19 Falkenberg and Tammy Sellars. From TDOT's Right-Of-
20 Way Division are Andrea Hall, Phil Addison, Roger
21 Cameron, Sheena Foster, Jimmy McSpadden, Joshua
22 Biddle, Cory Sharrock, Amber Warren, Denice Hagler
23 and Steve Head. From TDOT's Design Division are
24 Christie Brown, Eric Wilson, Stephanie Wallis,
25 Jennifer Pollard, Kenny Kerley, Aubin Fowler, Mark

1 Parrish, Zac Bailey, Suzanne Thomson, Mike Russell,
2 Louna Koeut, Dave Jordan, Alex Keelty and Jeremy
3 Mefford. And from TDOT Consultant CHA are Stefan
4 Bobot, Kevin Rearick and Scott Lecher.

5 Coming up in just a minute we'll have a
6 short presentation. Following the presentation, we
7 will have TDOT representatives throughout the room to
8 answer any questions that you may have.

9 Once again, this is a TDOT Public Meeting,
10 which means that there are a few different ways that
11 you can get your comments on the record if that's
12 something that you would like to do. We have a court
13 reporter present right here in the front of the room,
14 and she's going to be recording all public comments
15 that are made at this meeting tonight. She's also
16 available following the public question and answer
17 session to take your comments on a private session in
18 a private one-on-one if that is something that you
19 would prefer to do as well.

20 Also, when you walked in, there were
21 comment cards and pens. You can write down your
22 comments and hand those in to us tonight, or you can
23 take them home, and you have 21 days from today to
24 send them back to us to make sure that they are on
25 the record.

1 In addition, as I said, following the
2 presentation, we will set aside a few minutes for a
3 public question and answer session. That's if you
4 have any general questions about the project itself.
5 If it's something specifically about your property,
6 that's something that can be answered by our right-
7 of-way and design folks as well.

8 Before we go any further, I know that Bill
9 Jones is here from the Rogersville Review. Are there
10 any other members of the media here tonight? Okay.
11 If there are any elected public officials here, that
12 are here, please stand and say your name and the
13 title that you hold.

14 MR. SOLOMON: I'm Michael Solomon. I'm the
15 Mayor of Bulls Gap.

16 MR. NAGI: Thank you, Mayor. Okay. With
17 that being said, I'll turn things over to TDOT's Pete
18 Falkenberg, who will give us tonight's presentation.
19 Pete?

20 MR. FALKENBERG: Okay. Thank you.
21 Welcome, Everyone. I'm really glad to see a nice
22 turnout. We never know how many folks are interested
23 and will come and benefit from hearing some
24 information that the Department wants to present.
25 We've got a lot of folks from the Department here.

1 You might think we're ready to start building, but
2 we're not, just in case you might be thinking that.
3 But anyway, it takes a lot of folks to prepare,
4 design, and it takes a lot of folks to bring a
5 project forward. So that's just a small number
6 that's with us today.

7 What I'd like to do is discuss the proposed
8 improvements. I've talked with a few folks that have
9 come in, and they're saying, you know, "Well, why are
10 we doing this?", and that's, you know, a general
11 question that's there. And I would say from the
12 Department's perspective, what we're trying to do is
13 to provide a safer roadway section through Bulls Gap
14 all the way up to the Otes Community, and I know
15 you're familiar up there. The roadway widens, and
16 there are wider shoulders. If you remember what that
17 looks like there and I'm sure you do, that's more or
18 less what we're going to be providing in this general
19 area of the project, the five miles from 11E up to
20 the Otes Community. So that's the general idea.

21 And in order to do that, we'll be moving
22 left and right of the existing center line to improve
23 curves that are sharp. Perhaps that's where some of
24 the accidents have happened that you're familiar
25 with. We want to try to reduce that situation here

1 in this community.

2 We have preliminary plans here. Again,
3 some of you have been looking at that already. We're
4 going to have that session again after the
5 presentation, and we'd like to get more input from
6 you. We've talked about the comment cards and the
7 court reporting. I'll address questions afterwards.

8 The map here shows the general location of
9 the project, again from 11E up to the Otes Community,
10 the Speedwell Road where the Iron & Metal Works is
11 located, generally following along the existing
12 center line. We do have a mockup of that, and I'll
13 (inaudible). This is what's called a typical
14 section, which basically shows how the roadway will
15 look if we took a cross section of the roadway.
16 We're showing two lanes at 12 feet and 10-foot
17 shoulders and curb and gutter on either side with a
18 sidewalk. That section will be from 11E to the
19 Barrett Outdoor Living Company, and from there we
20 will change the section and reduce the shoulder width
21 to 6 feet. And reviewing that, because we're going
22 through a historical property that's on either side
23 of the road now, and we don't want to interfere with
24 anymore than we have to with the historical property,
25 so we're reducing the shoulder there, and we're

1 deleting the sidewalk also to help with that
2 situation. From that point, from the Barrett Outdoor
3 Living Company, we are -- back up here because there
4 are two things happening in the section here north of
5 the Barrett Outdoor Living to Guthrie Gap Road. From
6 that Outdoor Living Company, what we're doing is
7 we're reducing the shoulder width up to Pleasant Hill
8 Road. And if you're familiar there, from that point
9 to Guthrie Gap Road we widen that out to 10 feet on
10 our shoulder width. At Guthrie Gap Road we drop the
11 curb and gutter, and then we go with the section like
12 I was describing that's at Otes and that community on
13 up to Rogersville.

14 One of the benefits of having this whole
15 section is for folks that are traveling to the county
16 seat and then back to the interstate hopefully
17 passing through the community and not having any
18 safety issues or any deficient roadway that they'll
19 have to deal with.

20 We've had to look at some of the project
21 displays. I think they're still laying on the tables
22 back there. I wanted to point out a few things
23 that's on there. Some of that's been described to
24 you - the lines, sort of the property lines that are
25 shown, the tract numbers that each property that's

1 affected by the project will be assigned a tract
2 number. Some of you have found your tract number
3 already. That will help you. The proposed right-of-
4 way, the side roads and/or along the main line as
5 shown on the outside. Inside of that are the slope
6 lines and the cut or fill depending on whether we're
7 cutting a hillside down or whether we're having to
8 fill down to the existing property, which is below
9 the elevation of the roadway.

10 Is that better? Do I need to go back? I
11 can go back. All right.

12 Again, we have property lines and such
13 shown here. I'm hoping that the folks that were
14 helping you determine the impact on your property
15 were helping you with what these lines mean. Also,
16 we have a -- we have station references that helps us
17 to locate the project on the ground as well as on
18 plans. So it'd be important, like 27 is near Station
19 110. That would be helpful if you find that on the
20 roll plat, the aerial photography, and then ask one
21 of the many folks that are here or the consultant to
22 help you see more about what's going on on your
23 property.

24 And this is the section from the -- this
25 section here is Easy Street, and we show this because

1 it shows one of the things that we do to many of the
2 side roads. We are turning them in at a 90-degree
3 angle, and what that does is provides better sight
4 distance if you're on the side road or on the main
5 line to see.

6 (OFF THE RECORD. MICROPHONE ISSUES.)

7 All right. Well, I like to walk around a
8 little bit. Here we go. What I was trying to
9 describe here with Easy Street, and you may remember
10 how that -- you've been on Easy Street trying to come
11 out onto Main Street and turn right -- or left
12 actually. You've got a problem here, and we're going
13 to take care of that, and many of the side roads,
14 that's our plan is to make that sight distance easier
15 so that you don't have an accident or get in an
16 accident. Folks may be traveling a little faster,
17 and maybe they're traveling too fast, and I hope not,
18 but we're going to at least provide a safety
19 improvement for you. Let me see what else is
20 different here. Proposed driveways are shown here.
21 That's on all the plan sheets we have present. At
22 the present layout, it shows how the roadway
23 improvement will affect your property. There's a
24 right-of-way detail sheet that just identifies the
25 right-of-way aspect of it, and then there's a

1 proposed layout that shows where the roadway will be
2 and how it looks compared to what's going on right
3 now. Okay.

4 At the end of the project at Speedwell Road
5 there's an existing lane there and also where we're
6 coming in at 90-degree angles here towards Speedwell
7 Road or Old Tennessee 66, actually splitting them up
8 a little further than what they are now but better,
9 better sight distance, better safety. That's our
10 plan there.

11 As far as project status, basically this is
12 the process that a project goes through, all
13 projects, planning and environmental phases. We're
14 presently in the design phase on this project. We're
15 heading for the right-of-way phase and then go to
16 construction. I'm sure we're going to get some
17 questions on that, and we'll be ready to give you an
18 answer when that comes up here. Please hold your
19 questions until the end.

20 We're going to address the comments we get.
21 It's very important. Other than just talking to our
22 representatives here, write something down or talk to
23 the court reporter, and we will address your comments
24 during the design phase of the project, and your
25 comments can very well impact what happens on the

1 project. So don't think we're not paying attention.
2 We're going to pay attention. It's very important to
3 hear what you have to say.

4 We will be finalizing design for the
5 right-of-way. It's part of this process into the
6 fall of next year. At that time right-of-way plans
7 will be turned in, and we will go to the right-of-way
8 appraisal and acquisition stage where there will be
9 professional appraisers that will appraise property
10 that we need to take as part of the project. There
11 will be market value determined. I think some of our
12 right-of-way people have been addressing those
13 comments to you. Please talk to them before you
14 leave if you have a concern.

15 And after that, we will be scheduling the
16 phasing for construction. That's basically the steps
17 of the project.

18 Again, we can't say enough, your comments
19 are important. If you don't want to write anything
20 down now, you have time to think about it, and if you
21 want to change after you hear some more information,
22 you may have a different comment. But you can mail
23 your comments within the next 21 days, due on
24 December the 8th. We'll take those comments, and we
25 will consider everything that we get from you.

1 At this point, I want to open up the
2 question and answer period. I'd like to ask Freddy
3 Miller and Christie, Christie Brown to come up, a
4 representative from the (inaudible). By the way,
5 this is the contact information, and I'm going to
6 leave this out there. Daniel Oliver is our Director
7 of Project Development in Knoxville. He's not here,
8 but he's represented very well by -- from Region I.
9 That's his information. (Inaudible) down in
10 Nashville, and this is my number and e-mail address
11 if you want to write that down. I'll be glad to
12 visit, to work with you on that and show you the
13 plans or we can talk on the phone at any time.

14 Okay. That's basically our presentation,
15 and we want to save some time for questions and
16 answers and then to look back at the plans. If you
17 all want to stay and do that, it'll take a little bit
18 longer.

19 MR. NAGI: I apologize for the audio
20 issues, but if anybody has any general questions
21 about the project, please ask them now. Just stand
22 up, say your name, what your address is, and you can
23 ask those questions. Again, anything specifically
24 about your property, we've got our design folks and
25 our

1 right-of-way folks here. We'll go around the room
2 until 7:00 and answer any questions that you may
3 have. If anybody has any general questions about the
4 project that they want to say right now, please do so
5 now.

6 MR. ____: What kind of time frame are you
7 looking at going into the actual right-of-way and
8 acquisition?

9 MR. FALKENBERG: I was waiting for that
10 question.

11 MR. ____: You got it.

12 MR. Falkenberg: Okay. Thank you, Sir. We
13 have by our count 239 tracts at this acquisition,
14 just taking a little bit of property to taking a
15 home, and with that many and on a project this size,
16 it's usually two to three years from the time we get
17 started on the right-of-plans when they become
18 available. They're not going to be available until
19 the fall of next year. So the right-of-way process
20 will start in the fall of next year and go for
21 another two to three years, probably one or two
22 years. So the fall of '17, we're talking about '21.
23 That's to get the right-of-way acquired.

24 MS. ____: We can't hear you.

25 MR. FALKENBERG: Does that help? Is that

1 better? Yeah. I'm not used to doing this with a
2 microphone here. Okay. I'll go over that again.
3 The right-of-way process when the right-of-way plans
4 are available, which that's expected to be the fall
5 of next year, the fall of '17, and then go for two to
6 three years, more than likely three years, which
7 would be the year 2020. And the construction would
8 follow after that, which no one has asked that
9 question, but construction -- right now, the right-
10 of-way is not funded yet, and we're looking to the
11 Legislature to do that, and also the construction is
12 not funded as well. So it's a question of when,
13 after the right-of-way is acquired, when will we go
14 to construction? I don't have an answer for you.

15 MS. ____: But acquisition of the property
16 is 2020 is what you're looking at?

17 MR. FALKENBERG: That's, that's where we
18 stand. That's our best guess.

19 MR. ____: When will you start first buying
20 the property?

21 MR. FALKENBERG: Say again.

22 MR. ____: When will you start first buying
23 the property in Bulls Gap?

24 MR. FALKENBERG: Well, I'm not sure.
25 That's a good question. I'm not sure where they

1 start. Sounds like at the beginning would be a good
2 place, but is anyone from Right-Of-Way here can
3 address that or would want to address that?

4 MS. HALL: They normally start with the
5 relocations first.

6 MR. FALKENBERG: The relocation would start
7 first and then you would take the place in the
8 project just whenever we're ready to go with that,
9 whichever one is ready to go. Okay.

10 MS. HALL: They will have -- after we have
11 final right-of-way plan and before an appraiser would
12 come out, we're going to have another meeting for
13 property owners to really go through what the
14 right-of-way process is. I mean please ask us
15 questions now, but we will have another meeting when
16 we have these plans finalized before the appraiser
17 comes out.

18 MR. NAGI: Does anyone else have any
19 general questions about the project?

20 MS. ____: What happens if somebody actually
21 don't want -- would rather not sell?

22 MR. FALKENBERG: Don't want to sell? Well,
23 there's a process that -- there's a process that we
24 go through, and that can happen, and those happen.
25 It's a process that's called condemnation, and there

1 will be a court process involved where the State
2 would provide monies that they have determined are
3 fair market value, and then there's a process through
4 the court system to determine the damages. It takes
5 a little time for that.

6 MS. ____: Just curious.

7 MR. ____: Are they going to have a
8 relocation fee?

9 MR. FALKENBERG: A relocation fee?

10 MR. ____: Yeah.

11 MR. FALKENBERG: I'm not familiar with a
12 fee. I'm not sure about...

13 MR. ____: People have to relocate or go
14 (inaudible) in addition to paying for the property.
15 It's a pretty good program (inaudible). They're
16 provided a new house, pay closing costs and things of
17 that nature. We'll go into that (inaudible).

18 (MORE CONVERSATION NOT NEAR A MICROPHONE.)

19 MR. NAGI: Anyone else?

20 MS. ____: ...planning report published in
21 2006 had three options for the road from Otes, one of
22 which was a little bit to the west of here. It came
23 in at, according to the estimates, on your left side
24 \$3 million cheaper than going through town like this.
25 Can you talk to why this route was chosen as opposed

1 to one of the two other published options on the TDOT
2 website?

3 MR. FALKENBERG: Is there anyone to...

4 MR. MILLER: My name is Fred Miller with
5 the Design Division. I remember that report also. I
6 am not aware of a -- or I'm not sure what the
7 reasoning was. You know, I don't have an answer for
8 you tonight. We can get that for you. The
9 Department would have made a decision based on a
10 number of factors to be able to do that.

11 MR. ____: ...considerations are often
12 weighted to...

13 MS. ____: Sure. I was just curious because
14 of where it stated that the option, it's called
15 Option B to the west of here said it would displace
16 less residents and that it would be \$3 million
17 cheaper. I was curious as to what would be better
18 than a \$3 million savings and less people...their
19 homes.

20 MR. FALKENBERG: Please send us a comment
21 and questions, and we'll address that and give you
22 our best answer.

23 MS. ____: I appreciate that.

24 MR. FALKENBERG: Anyone else?

25 MR. ____: How far along -- is this then

1 presented for registration -- you said (inaudible).

2 How far along is that, the money for building the
3 project?

4 MR. FALKENBERG: As far as the funding for
5 the remaining pieces?

6 MR. ____: Yes.

7 MR. FALKENBERG: Right now we don't have it
8 in our three-year plan and will not be developed
9 until later in the fall for the next three years. So
10 I don't know how to answer it until that comes out in
11 the spring, next spring.

12 MR. ____: So it hasn't been discussed in
13 the Legislature?

14 MR. FALKENBERG: Oh, I think it's been
15 discussed, but it has not been decided to be included
16 in the three-year plan. It's not been -- it'll be on
17 our website, and you can see all of the projects that
18 are in there. Anyone else?

19 MS. ____: (Totally inaudible.) I want to
20 know about the sidewalks. Are they (inaudible)?

21 MR. FALKENBERG: Okay. The plan is just to
22 have them in the Bulls Gap community. Beyond where
23 Bulls Gap ends, the city limit ends they will stop.

24 MR. ____: For the record, the sidewalks
25 ended at the (inaudible) entrance. Is that for the

1 north entrance to the storage lot out there?

2 MR. FALKENBERG: The north entrance, I
3 believe it's...

4 MR. ____: Okay. That's in the city limits.

5 MR. FALKENBERG: Yes. Yes.

6 MR. ____: Are they planning on extending
7 the city sewers out there?

8 MR. FALKENBERG: We'll have to coordinate
9 the project once we know what those plans are.
10 There's a process that we go through with utility
11 coordination to make sure that we work with that in
12 developing the plans over there. We're hoping -- I'm
13 hoping to find out ahead of time so they can be
14 coordinated with construction.

15 MS. ____: I have a question. What options,
16 what options do we have, what recourse can we take if
17 we do not and are not happy with the proposed road as
18 to the one that nobody knows anything about because
19 the State wouldn't (inaudible)? What are our
20 options?

21 MR. FALKENBERG: Your options are wide open
22 as far as what you want to comment on. If you don't
23 -- you know, if you don't like the project, please
24 tell us. Tell us what you don't like about it.

25 MS. ____: Are there any other options?

1 MR. FALKENBERG: At the present we're
2 developing just one option, yes. That's Option A,
3 which is where (inaudible) where it is now. Yes. If
4 you don't like that, please comment, send us your
5 comments, talk to the court reporter on just whatever
6 you like.

7 MR. NAGI: We have time for one more
8 question if anybody wants to ask a general question.

9 MS. ____: The funding for the project, will
10 there be a possibility that they'll raise our land
11 taxes?

12 MR. FALKENBERG: I don't think I'm
13 qualified to answer that. I don't, I don't know
14 about that. Generally road projects are not tied
15 directly to that. That's my personal experience. I
16 live in Nashville, and we have road projects all the
17 time, and (inaudible). Everybody wants to raise
18 taxes, but it's not in this situation (inaudible)
19 taxes being raised. Mr. Mayor?

20 MAYOR SOLOMON: The only thing that I could
21 see with that would be if there was better access to
22 your property would raise the value of the property,
23 which a better road would raise the taxes to your
24 property than what it is now. That's kind of a
25 stretch. That's really kind of a stretch. A better

1 road...

2 MR. FALKENBERG: There's the man who knows
3 the answer.

4 MR. ____: If this road widens down at the
5 end of the years, when do you all think you're going
6 to drop a grading blade on it?

7 MR. FALKENBERG: I'm perceiving that I
8 addressed that on the (inaudible), but it will have
9 to go through the right-of-way process, which I'm
10 saying would be around 2020, and then construction
11 would come after that. It's a legislative process
12 that we have to rely on. The Department does in
13 order to have funds available.

14 MR. ____: (Inaudible)?

15 MR. FALKENBERG: This takes a long time to
16 develop. I mean that's just the way...

17 MR. ____: It'll take a long time to get it,
18 too. We'll probably never see it.

19 MR. FALKENBERG: Well, I'm hoping it's
20 something that might be an improvement that you all
21 would like, but I don't know when it would be.

22 MR. ____: You're probably right. They'll
23 forget about us.

24 MR. FALKENBERG: Okay. We're ready to end
25 the question and answer session for now.

1 MR. NAGI: Okay. Thank you very much.

2 We'll be here until 7:00 to answer any questions on a
3 one-to-one format. Also, give any comments you want
4 to make to the court reporter. She's here until 7:00
5 and will be happy to take your comments on a one-to-
6 one fashion as well. Thank you very much.

7
8 COMMENTS MADE TO COURT REPORTER:

9
10 COURT REPORTER: May I have your name,
11 please, for the record?

12 MR. KESTERSON: Jayson Kesterson. My
13 address is 415 North Main Street in Bulls Gap,
14 Tennessee. One of the reasons that I'm asking the
15 question is, my property is on -- if you're going
16 north on Highway 66, it is on the left-hand side, and
17 the property on the right-hand side is just an open
18 field. But the plans are to come on -- into my yard,
19 and it looks to be approximately ten foot from my
20 front porch is where the easement will come to. And
21 I'm just curious as to why we couldn't go to the
22 other side of the road where there's nothing.
23 There's also sewer lines, gas lines, telephone lines
24 on my side of the highway that would have to be
25 relocated. So that's just curious. It looks to me

1 like it's going to take a lot of money to move those
2 lines off of that. Also, it would -- it looks like
3 would have my property at a lower rate since the
4 highway is going to be sitting basically on the front
5 porch. So it's not going to be a win situation for
6 me it doesn't look like. Thank you.

7 COURT REPORTER: Thank you.

8
9 COURT REPORTER: May I have your name and
10 address, please, for the record?

11 MR. ARNOTT: Travis Arnott, 421 Wolfe
12 Branch Road, Bulls Gap. The property is Number 155A.
13 It's taking the house of an 89-year old man that
14 still lives at home by himself. The way it looks on
15 the map, you could switch the road, shift it just a
16 little bit, and you could probably miss his house.
17 And that address is 1219 Highway 66, and basically I
18 feel like if you take his house, you'll pretty much
19 just bury him. You know, it's going to kill him
20 because it's got sentimental value, and there's no
21 price you can put on sentimental value. I'm done
22 with that. That's good enough.
23 THIS COMPLETES ALL MATTERS PRESENTED IN THIS TDOT
24 PUBLIC MEETING.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Betty B. Neal, Notary Public and Court
Reporter, Barringer Court Reporting, hereby certify
that the foregoing is a true and complete transcript
to the best of my ability and understanding of the
Tennessee Department of Transportation Public Meeting
held at Bell Gap School, 315 Allen Drive, Bulls Gap,
Tennessee on November 17, 2016.

WITNESS my hand and official seal at office
at Gray, Tennessee, this the 23rd day of November
2016.

BARRINGER COURT REPORTING

By: _____

NOTARY PUBLIC

My commission expires: October 29, 2019.